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SOME DEMONSTRATIONS ON EXTRAOCULAR IMAGE IN CHINA

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FOREWORD

Accompanied by my wife, I undertook a lecture tour on recent developments in physics through three universities in the People's Republic of China from September 1980 through February 1981. Totally unrelated to my lectures or past experience, my attention was incidentally drawn to the upsurge of interest among the populace on some children's ability of having an extraocular image. This kind of interest was apparently stimulated by the first report in Sichuan Daily on March 11, 1979 about a twelve-year old boy being able to recognize a written word by his ear. In late 1980 and early 1981 when we were there, both the interest and activity in extraocular image had already grown to large proportions on a nationwide scale (Ref.1). It was in this general atmosphere that our friends and former colleagues had urged us to be either spectators or referees for a few informal extraocular demonstrations. I will narrate our experiences on extraocular image; two in Hefei in central China and one in Peking.

The First Demonstration

This occurrence took place on November 24, 1980 in Hefei. After dinner, Yin Ke-neng (尹可能) (Lecturer in the Department of Radio Engineering), his wife, and son came to see us at our hotel with Zhu Jin-Kang (朱近康) (A lecturer in the same department), his wife, and their nine-year old son, Zhu Ji (朱戟). Mr. Yin was one of the persons responsible for setting up my lectures at the University of Science and Technology of China. Mr. Zhu told me and Yin that only a short while earlier he felt that somehow his son had the faculty of Extraocular Image (henceforth abbreviated as EOI--my own notation). He thought that we may find it fun to give his son a try. My wife was willing to take him up on the

offer and wrote with a ball-point pen, out of everybody's sight, the Chinese word (日) meaning "sun" on a piece of paper which was folded into a small opaque pad enclosing the word. The boy traced the sample with his fingers (Picture 1) and spoke out only part of the word at first and the complete word correctly at the end. My wife tried two other Chinese words in succession, (平) and (天), meaning "level" (as in water level) and "sky". The boy was able to name the word correctly each time, although somewhat haltingly. When asked how he felt in tracing the word, he described that there was a tingling sensation in his fingers when they were right on the line.

Zhu Ji's performance surprised us very much because this was our first experience in seeing it done, even though Mr. Zhu apologized for his son's inexperience.

The Second Demonstration

The second demonstration took place on November 30, 1980 in a classroom at the University of Science and Technology. Knowing about my interest in EOI from Zhu Ji's demonstration, Mr. Jia Zhi-bin (贾志斌) (Proctor of the Hefei Associated University) organized a group demonstration and invited four children from the local Liuan (六安) Elementary School. The children were Wang Wei-hua (王辉) (girl, age 11, 5th grade), Liang Shu-jing (梁淑静) (girl, age 10, 3rd grade), Xu Xiang (徐翔) (girl, age 9, 4th grade), and Duan Lian-yong (段炼勇) (boy, age 9, 3rd grade). They were known to have some faculty of EOI to varying degrees. Mr. Jia had his aides prepare over one hundred samples, each consisting of a piece of paper, on which either a Chinese word or an English letter was written in color (red, blue, or black). Each sample paper was folded many times into a small pad, either sealed at the folding edge with a touch of glue or completely sealed. In any case, the writing inside each sample was not visible to the eye.

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Mr. Jia opened the meeting with the four children sitting in chairs directly facing the front row and with an audience of some sixty University students and many elementary school (associated with the University) students. Mr. Jia asked me to be the chief referee with my wife and one other friend as assistant referees, all sitting in the front row directly facing the demonstrators. We saw an usher carrying a big plate of randomly placed samples to the demonstrators and let each of them take a sample at will. Each demonstrator put the picked sample between his or her palms. In less than a minute or two the three girls indicated that they already got their answers. Mr. Jia announced to them that each of them should write on the sample envelope the name and the EOI result (i.e., the word and its color they "saw"). These unopened samples were handed over to me and I then let them be opened one-by-one in front of us (three referees) and have the contents be compared between the inside and the outside. I then announced that Wang Wei-hua got the red-colored word (男) meaning "male" correctly for both the Chinese character and its color. Liang Shu-jing got correctly the red-colored word (周) pronounced as "Zhou" (best known as the Zhou or Chou Dynasty in Chinese history). Similarly, Xu Xiang got the word (见) meaning "see" equally correctly. But the boy, Duan Lian-yong, was not able to get any answer, and the poor boy sobbed for his failure.

As we were to go on with more demonstrations by the four subjects, on different samples, there arose in the audience an uproar among the elementary school students. We heard them calling out aloud why couldn't they join the demonstration; even though many of them would be trying out for the first time. Mr. Jia and I agreed to let them have a try-out but limit the number of

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volunteers to five. Their names were Tan Qing-jiu (谭庆九) (girl, 5th grade), Liu Shu-ling (刘淑玲) (girl, 5th grade), Liu Chun-yan (刘春燕) (girl, age 10, 5th grade), Liu Jun (刘尹) (girl, age 5-1/2), Liu Zhong-jian (刘忠建) (age 12, 5th grade).

The results of the second round of EOI demonstration are the following. Among the original invited demonstrators, Wang Wei-hua got the red-colored word (广) meaning "broad" correctly (she had the sample crumbled in her hand), Liang Shu-jing got the word (公) (oftentimes meaning "public") correctly. Xu Xiang got correctly the black-colored word (月) meaning "moon". These were their second round of successes. Among the new volunteers, Tang Qing-jiu first had the right answer for the letter "F" and afterwards also for the letter "G". Liu Shu-jing was right with the answer, the letter "M". Liu Chun-yan was the first and only one to use her ear in recognizing the Chinese word (力) meaning "strength". Liu Zhong-jian was right about the Chinese blue-colored word (为) commonly used as a preposition. Finally, the 5-1/2 year-old girl, Liu Jun (younger sister of Liu Chun-yan) was right about the Chinese word (上) meaning "up". One must say that the volunteers did as well as the veterans, because there was not a single failure among all the participants.

I was lucky to have Mr. Jia's permission for the referees to hold a short private session with the invited demonstrators. I asked the girls in what manner the extrasensory image came to them. The girls did not describe their impressions in exactly the same language, but they did agree on certain things which we'll temporarily regard as the common ground. Suppose the subject receives a sample between her palms; she needs a good concentration of mind. After a little while (a minute or so), she may feel a slight warmth in the hands or a certain tingling sensation. There seems to be something like

a sensation on the move or a current going up from the hand(s) to the head (or the brain). An image begins to form in the "mind's eye". It appears first as a small colored blur and then gradually expands or enlarges into a larger and a much clearer colored image in focus. Finally, the subject "reads" out what she "sees".

The Third Demonstration

The demonstration occurred on February 6, 1981. On an impromptu visit of ours to the home of my former student, Yang Long-sheng (杨龙生), who is now a Senior Scientist at the Institute of Electronics, we bumped into a gathering of Yang's family of six (three generations) and two young sisters from the neighborhood. Yang suggested that, since the two sisters were known to be good subjects of EOI, it would be a nice occasion for us to witness at least the performance of the younger sister who recently won the first prize in a demonstration at the Institute of Physics. We were, of course, delighted with this opportunity and immediately welcomed the ten-year old student named Yu Po (余勃) to proceed. We had, however, to pay the price of being the principal monitors of the performance.

In the first test, my wife went to a writing desk at the far end of the room, wrote something on a single sheet of paper which was then wrapped, and came back with a sample in a hollow wax ball roughly 3/4" in diameter (the ball consisting of two hollow hemispheres which could be closed, usually used as a container for medicine pills, available in Chinese households). Except for herself, nobody else knew what my wife actually put into the ball. The ball was placed into the hand of Yu Po, who quickly held the ball by both hands behind her back (Picture 2). In about one-half minute, Yu Po called out that she "saw" the red-colored Chinese word (主);

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one of its many meanings is "Lord" in the religious sense. My wife quickly affirmed that the answer was correct.

In the second test, my wife repeated her secret mission and came back with a plastic box of roughly 1/2" x 1/2" x 2". Yu Po put it in her hands behind her back and in about one-half minute announced correctly the blue-colored Chinese word (分); one of its many meanings is "separate".

At this juncture, Dr. Lu Bao-wei (吕保伟), who is my former student and is now the Director of the Institute of Electronics, joined our company and was about to take us to his house for dinner. Seeing what was going on, Lu volunteered to make a sample known only to himself, and came back with his own wax ball. Yu Po handled Lu's sample in the same manner and announced in the usual time that the word inside the ball was the red-colored Chinese word (中) meaning "central", which was the correct answer. This amounted to a third test which was equally successful (Picture 3, with Yu Po triumphantly holding the sample taken out from the container after the test).

At the end of these tests, I requested the host to allow me to ask Yu Po a few questions. Yu Po acknowledged that her older sister (age 15) by the name Yu Yan (余雁) could do pretty much the same thing. She then proceeded to describe her impressions about this kind of EOI with frequent nodding of agreement by Yu Yan (Picture 4).

Yu Po's description of her sensation contained details which were in some ways quite different from those of the Hefei subjects, but the principal conclusions appeared to be in gross agreement. She did not feel any warmth or tingling feeling in her hands when she received the sample. (It might be noted that Yu Po had thick containers enclosing the paper-wrapped

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samples in addition to samples in thin-paper wrappings, as in Heifei's case. But, she first "saw" 12 different colored spots, only one of which brightened up while the others were vanishing. The colored bright spots appeared to be flashes swept from the right side of her head to the left (her sister Yu Yan, nodded her assent), making flashes of dots or strokes somewhat disorderly. Finally, the whole image of the colored writing appeared clearly.

DISCUSSION

There are some major questions that can be asked of the type of EOI demonstrations represented above. We will try to discuss them in the following order.

1) Is the EOI phenomenon real in nature? It would be a real phenomenon in a given act or demonstration if no fraud is involved in the whole process. To prove that the EOI phenomenon is indeed real, we insist that only one single repeatable "honest-to-goodness" case is needed for the establishment of the objective reality, even if many other EOI demonstrations can be proved to be fraudulent. That one single case, however, must be proved to be rigorously and completely free from any kind of fraud(s). This kind of proof is admittedly very hard to come by but must be achieved beyond any reasonable trace of doubt.

To illustrate the point, I would like to take up the case of the Third Demonstration where my wife did two EOI experiments with the subject Yu Po, involving a colored Chinese word written inside a paper pad which was itself contained in a wax ball and the other involving a similar situation with a plastic box. A fraud may have been committed as a result of certain special acts among three persons: Yu Po, my wife, and a third person, X. Case (1):

Yu Po may be a "psychic"* who could read my wife's mind or the sample directly, or she may be a magician who could play tricks with the sample. However, Yu Po is only a ten-year old student, not known by the Yang family, who are close neighbors, to be either a psychic or magician. The host, Yang, being my former student and having had a close relationship with me for many decades, would not knowingly subject me to seeing an act of deception without telling me the truth. Case (ii): An act of collusion between Yu Po and my wife was obviously out of the question. Case (iii): The person X could be a psychic, a magician, or an ordinary person. First, if X were a psychic, that person might be able to read my wife's mind and then transfer the information content to Yu Po by some act. But Yu Po showed not the slightest indication that she was being influenced by anybody, certainly not within one-half minute's time, when she gave the right answer. Secondly, if X were a magician, the person needed to play tricks with my wife's privately prepared sample and then from a distant point transfer the real sample to Yu Po and/or play another trick to reveal the information to her. There was no evidence that these complicated magician's acts were performed, and the required time for it was rather too short. Thirdly, if X were an ordinary person, such a person was not at any time or place close enough to my wife (to the best of her knowledge) to spy on her information and then somehow signal the information to Yu Po. There was no indication that a person (or persons) performed such a delicate spy and delivery job for either one of the two experiments. Again,

*A "psychic" is defined by Webster's Third International Dictionary as "a person apparently sensitive to nonphysical forces". In this paper, a psychic is introduced only for the sake of argument. We do not believe such a person really exists.

shortness of time (about one-half minute) would make the operation hardly practicable.

Having gone over all the imagined possibilities of fraud on a specific EOI demonstration we witnessed, we found none of the suspicions well founded. I am left with no better alternative than to assume the observed phenomena was indeed real.

In a broad sense, I have no reason at all to suppose any of the three demonstrations we eye-witnessed was in any way fraudulent. In the same vein, we heard that virtually hundreds of demonstrations or experiments on EOI involving young children have been conducted all over China during the past two years and, in general, the results were about the same as ours. If most, if not all, of these acts are fraudulent, then one would have to assume that multitudes of Chinese people all freely joined in a widespread act of conspiracy and deception. Such an assumption would be utterly unthinkable.

During this writing it came to my attention that the Russians had somewhat earlier reported the "Dermo-Optical Perception" effect, which in many ways paralleled the present description of the EOI phenomenon (Ref. 2).

2) What is the explanation of the EOI phenomenon? Assuming that EOI is a real phenomenon, the first question is whether the phenomenon can be explained in terms of known physical forces. The answer has to be a negative one at the present stage of knowledge. Let us examine, however, what these known physical forces can do. There are only four known physical forces: the strong force of nuclear origin, the familiar electromagnetic force, the weak force of the elementary particle origin (or of the nuclear radioactive decay), and the gravitation force which is ubiquitously present between any two masses. The only force that can be applied to human bodies is the electro-

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magnetic force. The other three forces apparently have no particular relevance. Human bodies are known to radiate and absorb radiations at microwave and infrared frequencies but they also absorb x-ray, γ -ray and even cosmic rays. Similarly, words written in color can emit and absorb radiation from very low frequencies through microwave and millimeter waves, infrared, and visible (perhaps even including ultraviolet to x-rays and beyond). But, such radiations are usually extremely weak and can be partially or wholly blocked by certain intervening materials. Hypothetically speaking (overlooking the extraordinarily small intensities at the moment) when such a radiation enters the human body at a crucial spot known to the Chinese as (穴位), an "acupuncture point", and through the skin to the nerve endings at the location, electric impulses could be generated and travel through nerve fibers to the cerebrum of the brain. There the information content carried by the impulses could be processed by the human brain "computer" whose immense function, intellect, and maneuverability exceed, except for the speed, those of the present man-made computers by large orders of magnitude. The net result for EOI from the cerebrum "computer" would then be an output that can perhaps be displayed as a "mental image", somewhat similar to what appears on a television screen.

The above description based upon the presumed action of an electromagnetic force gives a very simplistic and totally inadequate mechanism, both qualitatively and quantitatively, of how an EOI phenomenon might work in a human body. This inadequacy may be in part due to our lack of understanding of the implied super high sensitivity toward EOI by children (particularly the girls) around the age of ten and some mysterious power of interaction, realizable in a human system, with an extraordinarily weak signal.

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If we accept the EOI phenomenon as real and a rational explanation by way of known physical forces is wanting, the scientific world should explore a new frontier of knowledge in the biophysical domain, such as a modern interpretation of the Chinese traditional concept of Ch'i (气), translatable as "energy" or "vital energy", which in its rhythmic circulation around the human body may allow an enormous amount of power concentrated at a spot (say, an acupuncture point) for a short period of time.

References

1. "Parapsychology, Is it Real?" China Reconstructs, Vol. 30, p. 50, January 1981.
2. Henry Gris and William Dick, "The New Soviet Psychic Discoveries," Warner Books, 1978, p. 367.

Pictures

- Picture 1 Zhu Ji is concentrating on getting the word in the paper-wrapped sample.
- Picture 2 Yu Po is concentrating to "see" the colored word in a sample concealed in a wax ball held by her hands behind her back.
- Picture 3 Yu Po is triumphantly showing the sample for which she got the right answers.
- Picture 4 Yu Po and her sister, Yu Yan, agree on their EOI mental experiences.

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Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4